



National Park Service Celebrates National Trails Day with Events Nationwide

"Trails and Health...A Natural Connection"

Every year on the first Saturday in June, over one million hikers, bikers, equestrians, and other trail users flock to their favorite trails to discover, celebrate, and learn about trails as part of National Trails Day. This year, the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (Rivers & Trails) of the National Park Service (NPS) will participate in numerous National Trails Day events nationwide. Rivers & Trails is the community resource of the NPS that works with local citizen groups to preserve open space, conserve rivers, and develop trail and greenway networks.

Now in its twelfth year, National Trails Day — the only national celebration of America's trails — consists of events including new trail dedications, workshops, educational exhibits, equestrian and mountain bike rides, water trail paddling, rollerblading, trail maintenance and hikes on America's favorite trails. This year's theme is "Trails and Health...A Natural Connection".

Rivers & Trails will celebrate National Trails Day with communities across the country. Events include:

- **Florida:** An event to celebrate both the Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail and the Florida Keys Overseas Paddling Trail. Participants in the bike-kayak event will cover about 14 miles and will enjoy a barbeque afterwards, sponsored by Paradise Paddlers Kayak & Canoe Club.
- **Maine:** A community-wide walkathon (sponsored by Kennebec Messalonskee Trails) on three segments of their planned 18-mile trail system. Nonprofit organizations in the Waterville area are using the venue to stage their own fundraising walkathons. The goal is to have 1000 people walking the trails. Two walks will end in the Voices of the Kennebec Festival and one will end at the Mill Island health and wellness celebration.
- **Minnesota:** A Moonlight Bike Ride (hosted by the Chisago County Parks and Trails Foundation) on the Sunrise Prairie Trail, a 24-mile multi-use paved trail built on an abandoned railroad corridor between Hugo and North Branch, Minnesota.
- **Minnesota:** A grand opening ceremony to officially open two paved trails in Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park in Washington County.
- **Nebraska:** A trail clean-up and graffiti patrol on the Field Club Trail in Omaha. Volunteers (including area senior citizens) will receive frisbees, t-shirts and water bottles.
- **New York (Wurtsboro):** A work session to clear brush and create a garden near the trailhead of the future D & H Canal linear park. The session will be followed by a guided walk, led by the Mamakating Historical Society, to familiarize citizens with the project and transport them back in time to 19th Century canal-era Wurtsboro.
- **New York (Narrowsburg) to New Jersey (Palmyra Cove):** A gathering of more than 50 organizations associated with the Delaware River Greenway Partnership to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the inclusion of two stretches of the Delaware River into the National Wild & Scenic Rivers System and the development of the Delaware River Water Trail concept for 220 miles of the river. The 10th annual Delaware River Sojourn, an annual event that combines canoeing, kayaking, camping, educational programs, and historical interpretation will be held June 7-14 at various locations along the Delaware River. This event will feature local artists paddling and painting scenes along the Delaware, with resulting art donated to open space preservation efforts along the river.
- **Oregon (Astoria):** A launch of the 146-mile Lower Columbia River Water Trail in a week-long series of community events, hosted by the Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership,

ending with a celebration at Fort Clatsop National Monument. Saturday's event will include dedication of a new launch site, installation of signs, an interpretive paddle trip led by an NPS Ranger, and canoe rides.

- **Tennessee (Ocoee):** An event by the Benton MacKaye Trail Association to celebrate the dedication of a 175-mile extension of the Benton MacKaye Trail through the Cherokee National Forest and Great Smoky Mountains National Park. After speeches from federal agency officials, attendees will take a hike or help start construction on the new section of trail. Mary Margaret Sloan, President of AHS, and a representative from the Centers for Disease Control will join the festivities.
- **Tennessee (Soddy-Daisy):** A dedication by the Cumberland Trail Conference of three new segments of the Cumberland Trail. The day will feature guided hikes, local history presentations, healthcare and conservation exhibits, food, and the official trail dedication ceremony with speakers from local, regional and federal agencies. Mary Margaret Sloan, President of AHS, and a representative from the Centers for Disease Control will join the festivities.
- **Rhode Island to Virginia:** A ten-day, nine-state trek by Lee Anderson, Director of Program Development at Fort Mifflin, a Revolutionary War site and National Historic Landmark. The trek, "Walking in the Footsteps of History," will follow the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route and includes stops from Newport (RI) to Williamsburg (VA). Lee will give talks about the history of the last major campaign of the Revolutionary War and be joined by other re-enactors, color guards and youth.
- **Vermont:** A number of trail events (17) throughout the Upper Valley, hosted by the Upper Valley Trail Alliance.
- **Washington:** A hike along the newly developed Deer Harbor Public Path Loop, hosted by the Orcas Island Pathways Committee. The group will have a booth at the Deer Harbor Saltwater Festival where people can learn about the health benefits of trails, sample healthy trail snacks, and find out more about Orcas Pathways.
- **Washington, DC:** A 6-mile leisurely hike on the C&O canal towpath.

Rivers & Trails staff assist with approximately 300 projects each year and have worked in all 50 states. Each year these projects conserve over 700 miles of river, create more than 1,000 miles of trail, and protect over 30,000 acres of open space.

National Trails Day is organized by the American Hiking Society, a recreation-based conservation organization dedicated to establishing, protecting and maintaining America's foot trails. Additional support comes from federal agency supporters including the NPS, the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service and the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration.

For more information about the Rivers & Trails Program, visit www.nps.gov/rtca or call (202) 354-6900. For more information about National Trails Day, visit www.americanhiking.org or call (301) 565-6704.